

BRAINTREE & BOCKING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.
ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1940.

Public Health Offices,
St. Peter's Close,
Bocking,
Braintree.

October, 1942.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you an interim report on the public health and sanitary conditions of the district during the year 1940. For reasons due to the war it has again been necessary to curtail the size and contents of the report; similar causes being responsible for the delay in its appearance. Although the bulk of the usual statistical information is excluded, all necessary records have been preserved in order that a more complete record of the year under review, and of the other war years, may be made available when conditions are more opportune.

No separate report is being submitted by the Chief Sanitary Inspector, but a short summary of the work of his department during 1940 is included in this report.

The general health of the Urban District remained satisfactory during the year. There was no serious epidemic of infectious disease.

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES.

There were no changes in the general health services provided in the district during the year.

Legislation in Force.

No new byelaws were adopted or came into force in 1940. An application by the Council to adopt Byelaws for the regulation, under the Public Health Act 1936, of Tents, Vans and Sheds within the Urban District was not granted by the Ministry of Health.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water.

Both the Notley Road and the Bocking Waterworks were used for supply purposes throughout the year. As in 1939, pumping was again generally continuous at the Notley Road Waterworks, but even so the supply at times was barely adequate. The rest level of this well apparently remained stationary during 1940.

Circular 2086A dated 2nd August 1940 of the Ministry of Health was received which made chlorination of all public water supplies compulsory. At the Notley Road Works, gaseous chlorine, and at Bocking voxsan were the agents decided upon. At the end of the year, however, owing to the impossibility of obtaining the necessary apparatus in time, no chlorination was in operation at either works.

The emergency supply from Messrs Courtauld's well at Bocking was used to supplement the normal supply from October to December.

No new connections were made to the mains during 1940.

A sample taken from the main supply from the Notley Road Waterworks on 20th February, 1940, was reported upon by the County Bacteriologist as follows :-

Chemical results in Parts per 100,000.

Appearance: Slight opalescence - few particles of mineral debris.			
Turbidity: 11 p.p.m., Silica Scale.			
Colour	Normal.	Odour Nil.	
Reaction pH	Neutral: 7.9	Free Carbonic Acid	0.66
Electric Conductivity	at 20°C; 1840	Total Solids dried	
		at 180°C	123.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	42.0	alkalinity as Calcium	
		Carbonate	27.5
Hardness: Total	12.5	Temporary	12.5
		Permanent	0.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.00	Nitrites	Minute Trace.
Free Ammonia	0.0720	Ammoniacal Nitrogen	-
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0008	Albuminoid Nitrogen	-
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs.			
	at 80°F. 0.015		
Metals Iron	0.13	In solution	0.03
	Other metals absent.		

Bacteriological Results.

Number of Bacteria growing on Agar per cc. or ml. in 1 day at 37°C:	1
" " " " " " " " " " " 2 " " 37°C:	1
" " " " " " " " " " " 3 " " 20°C:	-

The Bacillus Coli ... Present in:- Absent in: 100 c.c.
 Bacillus Welchii (B.Enteriditis Sporogenes) Present in: - Absent in: -

Report: This sample contains a distinct trace of iron which causes slight opalescence and deposit. The water is otherwise quite satisfactory.

It is neutral in reaction, has moderate hardness, a high, but not excessive content of salinity, and is of satisfactory organic and bacterial purity in which respects it is considered wholesome in character and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

No sample was taken of the Bocking supply during the year.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Braintree Sewage Works. - These works continued to yield an effluent varying from unsatisfactory to very unsatisfactory on all occasions when samples were taken by the County Council for analysis.

Bocking Sewage Works. - A satisfactory effluent was given by these works on each of the three occasions on which samples were taken.

During the year there was an extension of the sewer in the Clapbridge Heights district, by the linking of the Clure Road and Vauxhall Drive sewers.

Five new connections were made to the sewer in 1940.

Sanitary Inspection.

During the year, inspections were made as a result of complaints of nuisances and of defects in dwelling houses etc. No routine inspections were possible, owing to pressure of Civil Defence (Evacuation) work in the Sanitary Inspector's department.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

No samples were taken either from the Council's Swimming Pool or the one privately owned pool in the District during the year.

HOUSING.

No inspections were carried out. Visits on complaint were made in respect of defects. Certain houses previously condemned under the Housing Acts were put into a reasonable state of repair and used for housing homeless people.

Milk.

There was no change in the licences granted to producers and retailers of designated milks. No samples of milk were taken in 1940.

Meat.

The scheme for centralised slaughtering under the Ministry of Food came into operation in February 1940. Since then, two slaughter-houses and occasionally a third have been used exclusively by the Ministry. The remainder of the privately owned slaughterhouses have not been used, but all were inspected at this time, and six were licensed. In the case of the others the owners were informed of the improvements which were necessary and that these would have to be completed before the premises were used for slaughtering. In addition one knackers yard was licensed.

During the year 16,034 animals were slaughtered for human consumption. Of those 14,901 or 92.8 per cent were inspected. Owing to other pressing matters in one week in September over 400 animals were slaughtered and not inspected. Apart from this particular week the average of inspection was 95.4 %.

The total amount of unsound food condemned during this period was 22.59 tons.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following cases of notifiable infectious disease occurred during the year.-

Scarlet Fever	27	Measles	9
Whooping Cough	40	Pneumonia	4
Diphtheria	6	Puerperal Pyrexia	3
Erysipelas	3	Cerebro-Spinal Fever	5

Three of the cases of Cerebro-Spinal Fever died.

In addition to the above notifiable diseases, Rubella (German Measles) was prevalent in the spring of the year, particularly among school children, although adults were also affected in many cases. In all cases the disease was mild in character.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

Before 1940 there had not been in existence in the Urban District any scheme for protective inoculation of the child population against diphtheria. In August, Essex County Council, as the Child welfare Authority in the District had inaugurated a scheme for the free immunisation of children under the age of five years.

In November, the Urban District Council had agreed to offer immunisation free of charge to the children of school age in the district. Before the Council's scheme could be put into effect, however, Ministry of

Health Circular 2230 of 7th December 1940 appeared with its intimation that stocks of alum-precipitated toxoid for this service would be available free of charge to the Local Authority and giving the Minister's approval, under section 177 (1) of the Public Health Act, 1936, to the provision of the necessary facilities. Only a few children had received treatment by the end of the year, however, as the scheme as a whole did not come into full swing until the beginning of January.

Tuberculosis.

There were 21 new cases notified, either formally or otherwise during the year. These were made up as follows :-

Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.	
Male	Female	Male	Female
6	7	4	4

During the year there were 3 deaths of persons on the Tuberculosis Register.

By the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations 1940, particulars of cases of men on the Tuberculosis Register have, from 23rd September 1940, to be furnished to the County Medical Officer of Health as each age group is called for registration. The latter in turn forwards these and any necessary additional particulars to the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

EVACUATION.

The official evacuees became fewer in number as the year advanced. In the autumn, although no official evacuees were received, large numbers of private evacuees came to the district, and in many cases billeting arrangements had to be made. For obvious reasons the exact numbers involved in such movements of population cannot be given.

The Hostel at "Boleyns" continued to be occupied by both children difficult to billet, and mothers and children who also caused difficulty in billeting. These latter were moved in May to another small hostel opened then for the purpose in Rayne Road, and "Boleyns" was available for difficult children from other districts.

As will be understood work under this head threw a big strain on the staff in the Sanitary Inspector's department, as all evacuation work was done in this department.

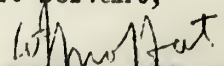
CASUALTY SERVICES.

Administrative work in connection with these services was again a major feature of the years activities and was not without its difficulties. It is satisfactory to record that when the time came for testing them under actual air conditions they were not found wanting in any major detail.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the members of the Council for their support and to the Council's officers for their welcome co-operation throughout the year.

I am,
Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,


Medical Officer of Health.